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NT 640 Exegesis of General Epistles

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NT 640 Exegesis of General Epistles

Preliminary Version

Ruth Anne Reese

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Office Hours: Tues 2:30-3:30; Wed 3:30-5:00

Fall 2008

3 semester units

Tues/Thurs: 1:00-2:15

Other hours by appointment

Description: A close reading of Jude and 1-2 Peter with special attention given to literary, socio-historical, and theological understandings of the epistles.

Prerequisites: NT 500 or 501/502; NT 520; and, NT (IBS) 510 or 511.

Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Employ a range of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of the General Epistles and apply those approaches to other NT books of similar genre;
- Understand the General Epistles within their socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts;
- Identify central issues in the critical study of the General Epistles;
- Articulate the importance of one's own presuppositions in the task of interpretation and understand the implications of Wesleyan presuppositions about Scripture;
- Articulate primary theological and ethical concerns of General Epistles;
- Demonstrate awareness of how the theological and ethical concerns of the General Epistles contribute to those of the canon and of constructive theology and ethics;
- Differentiate between critical, homiletic, and devotional commentaries; and
- Evaluate critically the usefulness of secondary literature in the study of the NT.

Concise Greek Students should be able to:

- Use Greek-based language tools to demonstrate proficiency in lexical semantics;
- Use Greek-based language tools to identify grammatical constructions (i.e, with regard to sentence structure and use of clauses);
- Use Greek-based language tools to engage in syntactical analyses (i.e, with regard to verbal aspect, mood, and voice; use of the genitive and dative cases).

Course Requirements and Reading:

- Class preparation, attendance, and participation (10%): Each student should prepare for each class by (1) carefully reading the assigned texts, (2) making their own notes on the text, and (3) comparing their observations with those made in one of the required commentaries below. The attendance policy is that any more than 3 absences will result in a failing grade.
- Interpretive Assignments (10% x 3 = 30%): On 2 class sessions prepare in advance and turn in at the beginning of the session an interpretive assignment addressing a pericope within the chapter assigned for that class session.

Interpretive assignments should be approximately 4 double spaced pages (i.e., approx. 1,000 words). For more information on these assignments see the document in my folder on the intranet.

- Theological Assignment (15%): On 1 class session prepare in advance a paper of approximately 4-5 double spaced pages (i.e., approx. 1,000-1,250 words) showing *either* how the theology of a particular General Epistle contributes to the canon *or* how a chapter or pericope within the book contributes to the overall theology of the epistle itself. Students who choose to complete this assignment in groups of two or three (turning in one assignment for the group) will raise their grade by one later grade (e.g., from B to B+). Students desiring suggestions and comments prior to final submission of their assignment may submit a penultimate draft no later than Nov. 15.
- Commentary Review (15%): Write a critical review comparing and contrasting at least two of the required commentaries below. The commentary review should be between 5-6 pages in length (i.e., approx. 1,250-1,500 words). General guidelines on book reviews are available in my folder on the Intranet. Students desiring suggestions and comments prior to final submission of their assignment may submit a penultimate draft no later than Oct. 12.
- Final Paper or Project (30%): Final Paper or Project (30%): A research paper or project on a topic of your choosing related to Jude or 1-2 Peter. The paper may address a theological or exegetical topic or some combination of the two. If you would like to turn in a project in some other form besides that of a paper, please talk to me about what you would like to do and how we can go about doing that. For details about what is expected for a research paper, please see the document in the course folder.

Required Reading:

Chester, Andrew and Ralph Martin. *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude*.

New Testament Theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Green, Joel B. *1 Peter*. Two Horizons Commentary. Eerdmans, 2007.

Reese, Ruth Anne. *Jude and 2 Peter*. Two Horizons Commentary. Eerdmans, 2007.

Required: pick one for each epistle

1 Peter

Achtemeier, Paul. *A Commentary on First Peter*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

Davids, Peter H. *The First Epistle of Peter*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990.

Jobes, Karen H. *1 Peter*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.

Michaels, J Ramsey. *1 Peter*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word 1988.

2 Peter & Jude

Bauckham, Richard. *Jude, 2 Peter*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word, 1983.

Green, Michael. *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*. 2nd, ed. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987.
Neyrey, Jerome. *2 Peter, Jude*. Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993.

Recommended Reading

Green, Joel B. (ed.). *Hearing the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999
Rodríguez, Raúl Humberto Lugo. "'Wait for the Day of God's Coming and Do What You Can to Hasten It...' (2 Pet 3:12): The Non-Pauline Letters as Resistance Literature." *Subversive Scriptures*, Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International 1997.

Note on purchasing commentaries: I recommend that you have at least one commentary for each of the General Epistles. My recommendation if you are considering purchasing only one commentary would be that you make use of multiple commentaries in the library and then purchase a commentary after you have decided which one you find provides you with helpful information in an accessible format.

Grading Criteria

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (catalog, p. 24):

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A= Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives
B= Good work: substantial achievement of course objectives
C= Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives
D= Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives
F= Unacceptable work: failure of course work

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction to Exegesis
Thurs Further Introduction to Exegesis: Demonstration in Jude
Required: Begin reading Chester & Martin on Jude

Week 2 Exegetical Approaches to the General Epistles: Demonstration in Jude
Required: Finish Chester & Martin on Jude and begin Reese
Recommended: Neyrey's Introduction pp. 1-20
Thurs What Constitutes a Theological Approach? Praxis in Jude

Week 3 A Theological Approach to Jude
Required: Finish Reese; Finish Chester and Martin
Thurs Introduction to 1 Peter

Due: Commentary Review

Week 4	1 Peter 1:1-12 Required: Begin Commentary
Thurs	1 Peter 1:13-25 Required: Commentary
Week 5	1 Peter 2: 1-10 Required: Commentary
Thurs	1 Peter 2: 11-25 Required: Commentary
Week 6	1 Peter 3: 1-12 Required: Commentary
Thurs	1 Peter 3: 13-22 Required: Commentary
Week 7	1 Peter 4: 1-11 Required: Commentary
Thurs	1 Peter 4: 12-19 Required: Commentary
Week 8	1 Peter 5: 1-14 Required: Commentary
Thurs	Theology of 1 Peter Required: Commentary, Chester & Martin, Finish Green
Week 9	Theology of 1 Peter
Thurs	Intro to 2 Peter Required: Commentary
Week 10	2 Peter 1:1-11 Required: Commentary
Thurs	2 Peter 1: 12-21 Required: Commentary
Week 11	2 Peter 2: 1-10a Required: Commentary
Thurs	2 Peter 2: 10b-22 Required: Commentary
Week 12	2 Peter 3: 1-13 Required: Commentary Due: Major Paper or Project
Thurs	No Class

Week 13 2 Peter 3: 14-18 & Theology of 2 Peter
Required: Finish Chester & Martin; Finish Reese

Thurs Theology of 2 Peter